



District Newsletter – September 2021

District Chair's Pastoral Letter

Dear Friends,

Like a shepherd he will tend his flock and with his arm gather them together; he will carry the lambs close to his heart, and gently lead those that have young (Isaiah 40.11)

I hope that through the summer weeks all have had opportunity for some rest, reflection and relaxation, even as we gather ourselves for a new Connexional year.

'Gathering and Regathering' in inclusive ways was a theme of the Sunday worship at this year's Methodist Conference, and each District was invited to offer a symbol linked to that theme. The representatives from the Cumbria District chose a cuddly 'Little Herdy' (see the photos, including of our symbol on display in the Conference hall during the week!).

Herdwick sheep are native to Cumbria, and their wool and general characteristics are extremely hardy and capable of dealing with the wet and cold weather endured on the higher fells in the Lake District. Living on the edge in the most difficult of conditions perhaps resonates with the way that we have all been living through the 'inclement' at best, life-taking at worst, weather of the pandemic? It might also resonate with the experience of those who for years have lived on the



margins of Society, and of our Church, experiencing belittlement and exclusion by prejudicial (pre-judging) attitudes and presumptions. Two of the Conference reports challenged this: Justice, Dignity and Solidarity; and the Theology of Safeguarding, which we will initially consider at our Synod on 11th September.

With these themes, sometimes we become victims, but too often perpetrators (even if unwittingly). This invites reflection, humility, and positive action on all our parts.

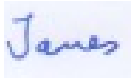
At various moments in the cycle of the seasons, Herdwick sheep are gathered and regathered from the margins on the fells to be brought to the lower fields and valley farms for lambing, clipping and sheering, sheep dipping, and breeding. The flock is intentionally maintained and invigorated through the genetic mixing enabled at times by a seasonal introduction of new ewes and tups.

In the same way, sometimes we need to be gathered in so as to include new members, giftings, identities, and attitudes, in order to flourish as a whole, before going back out again, to the service, and a style of service, to which we are called. As they travel to and from the mountains and valleys, Herdwicks are usually 'hefted' and know their own way to and fro on their paths and fells, even as their shepherds signal the time for these journeys. At times, entrusted and responsible, we can find our own way, yet, even more often than the Herdwicks perhaps, we need the help of our Good Shepherd to guide us into the places and ways that sometimes require from us greater humility and

grace, clarity and strength, in the repented attitudes and behaviours, and redeemed service and inclusion, to which we are called.

Herdy's are immensely lovable; amazingly, God finds that to be the case with us too! Maybe we can grow into ways that in thought and action become genuinely more loving, in our comings and goings, gatherings and re-gatherings. In this, through God's acceptance and affirmation of us, we will find the awareness and strength to accept and affirm others.

May God bless you and all,



The Revd Dr James Tebbutt



DISTRICT NEWS AND EVENTS

Coming out of the Pandemic

As lockdown restrictions have been ending, all churches and circuits have been thinking about what this means for the future shape of our church life and endeavours. For example, the Revd Graham Ransom, Superintendent Minister of the South Lakes Circuit, wrote the letter set out below (his 60th weekly letter to the South Lakes Circuit since the pandemic began!), and we gratefully include it here as it will perhaps resonate the situations and reflections of other churches and circuits as well, and the themes that others are presently reflecting upon.

Dear Friends,

I hit the grand old age of 60 recently, of course, we couldn't celebrate it as we wished, but I did have a good day. Now our little missives have reached that same, diamond landmark. I have been pondering on five questions lately, and that has started some discussion among various groups. These questions, I think, are key to the future. They are:

- * What have we started during the pandemic that needs to continue?
- * What have we started during the pandemic that need to stop?
- * What have we stopped during the pandemic that needs to restart?
- * What have we stopped during the pandemic that needs to stay stopped?
- * What else do we need to start now?

These questions look to the future of the Church. They help us to focus on the fact that, in order to survive, even thrive, we need to adapt, and change. I have looked at this subject on more than one occasion in these letters and have done so because I have worried about them on many occasions.

- How are we, under God, going to move forward?
- How can we best be the Church where we are?
- How can we tell the Good News of Jesus to those around us?
- How can we grow, as a Church and as Christians?

These, and many other questions hang on those original five.

However, I have become aware that these questions apply, not just to the Church, but to me as well and to you. They apply to all who profess the faith of Christ and seek to serve and follow, because the work of the Church depends upon the work of Christ's followers. It is, after all, we who make up the church, not the buildings. So, if we feel we cannot help and support as we answer questions 1, 3 and 5 above, then they cannot happen, and the work of God cannot continue in our communities.

The last months have seen great changes in our lives in general, and in our church lives in particular. I am heartened as I hear of buildings reopening and worship restarting. Life is returning to our churches. It is exciting and life affirming, even if it still isn't quite the same as it was. Indeed, it is unlikely ever to be the same as it was - do we want it to be the same? The five questions point to and encourage new ways of working. I was at a meeting recently looking at how the Connexional Initiative "New Places for New People" might be taken up in our District. This initiative looks, as the name suggests, at how we might do something new: plant new churches, start new groups, reach out to new people. This is something, which as a circuit, has been on our minds a lot of late. I can send you a short document explaining more of this if you wish, just ask.

It was Henry Ford who said, "If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got." Are we happy with what we've always got? Do we need to pray, seek and find other ways forward: new ways of being Church, new expressions of our faith?

I believe so. Remember the WW1 poster of Lord Kitchener with his finger extended, proclaiming "Your country needs you"? Well, your saviour needs you! We can all make excuses, but those whom God calls, he also equips, and God calls us to that which we can do, not that we can't. Please pray through those five questions as they relate to you.

Keep well, keep praying, keep searching.

Blessings,

Graham

Safeguarding Training



The Advanced Module (Online) 2021 Edition

This course is split into three parts:

- **Advanced Module (online) e-learning** - this takes between 4 and 7 hours, depending on your learning style, to complete. It can be completed in smaller sections over approximately 3 weeks. The accompanying Workbook is for your personal use and is not assessed.
- **Handbook** – to support learning during Advanced Module (online) and for further study and resources.
- **Advanced Module (online) Gathered Session** – a 2-hour group session via Zoom to consolidate learning from the e-learning.

The training aims to:

- consolidate and develop your previous safeguarding learning
- explore what this means in your designated role of responsibility within the Church
- further equip you with skills and resources to be confident in promoting good practice in the Church and community
- extend your understanding of responding well to different groups within the Church community.

The Cumbria District is running regular Advanced Module (online) programmes.

Dates for Gathered Sessions

Wednesday 29th September 10.00a.m. to 12 noon (bookings close on Tuesday 31st August)

Wednesday 29th September 2.00p.m. to 4.00p.m. (bookings close on Tuesday 31st August)

Tuesday 12th October 7.00p.m. to 9.00p.m. (bookings close on Monday 13th September)

Thursday 14th October 7.00p.m. to 9.00p.m. (bookings close on Wednesday 15th September)

To book onto a course you need to:

1. Select a suitable date on which to attend a Gathered session – see the list below. This session must be booked at least **4 weeks** in advance.
2. Book onto a course via Eventbrite, using this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/creating-safer-space-advanced-module-training-gathered-session-registration-58361794699>

Please note that you will need to use some form of computer and have reliable Wi-Fi access throughout this training. You will also need to register for the course using the email address which you will use throughout the training programme.

Once registered, you should receive more details via email and by post. If you have not been contacted within 21 days of your Gathered Session, please contact the District Safeguarding Officer, Graham Kay: Mobile 07704 037011 Email cumbria.district@dso.methodist.org.uk

For further information, please contact your Circuit Safeguarding Officer

Other Events and Information

From the Learning Network

**Thursday 7th
October 2021
1.30 – 3pm
Zoom Webinar**

Open to All: of particular relevance for ministers
pastoral visitors
pastoral workers
circuit stewards



After the Storm

Coping with Covid-19 Grief & Loss

So much has been lost because of Covid and while some are ready to move on and focus on the future, others are left behind in grief.

This webinar will look at the variety of losses we have experienced and offer some practical ways in which you can support those still grieving.

Book on Eventbrite
search After the Storm: Coping with Covid-19



Contact: Innortheast@methodistchurch.org.uk

Booking Link <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/after-the-storm-coping-with-covid-19-grief-and-loss-tickets-167040840651>

Bullying and Harassment

Understanding the dynamics of bullying and harassment, and exploring ways of responding with dignity and respect

place for hope
transforming conflict
promoting difference



Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th November

09:30 to 13:00 on zoom

Join a group to explore some basic techniques to create good practices in ministry that address negative behaviour

This course takes place over two mornings, please be available for both Wednesday and Thursday. Email Rob Glassonbury to book you place and include:

- Your postal address
- Your Circuit or denomination if not Methodist
NWMannNetwork@gmail.com

For more information contact Brec Seaton
seatonb@methodistchurch.org.uk

Bookings close on **Wednesday 20th October**

The Methodist Church has a training partnership with Place for Hope and there will be a small charge for non-Methodists sharing with us on this day. Please do not let costs deter you from joining with us.

 **The Methodist Church**
North West & Mann

CUMBRIA METHODIST DISTRICT DIARY

SEPTEMBER 2021

10-12 Queens College Rural Placement in KSAT Circuit
11 10:00 Representative Synod – Western Fells Circuit: Lorton Street MC, Cockermouth
18 9:30 CTiC Dementia Anna Chaplaincy Conference – Zoom
22 10:00 Regional Learning Network Forum – Zoom
23 10:30 MWiB Gathering – Penrith Methodist Church
28 *Welcome to Cumbria Ecumenical Day – Postponed*

OCTOBER 2021

6 10:00 District Probationers Committee Briefing – Penrith Methodist Church
7 19:30 District Safeguarding Group – Zoom
9 10:00 District Circuit Stewards Meeting – Cottage Wood Centre, Calthwaite
9 14:30 Argentina Link Group – Langwathby Methodist Church
13 10:00 District Policy Group – Stainton Methodist Church
16 10:00 District Local Preachers' Meeting – Carver Uniting Church, Windermere TBC
29-31 3Generate – NEC, Birmingham

NOVEMBER 2021

17 10:00 District Sabbaticals Advisory Group – Rydal Hall
17-19 12:00 Ministers Retreat – Rydal Hall
22-24 MWiB Together at Thornleigh Hotel, Grange over Sands
28 pm County Ecumenical Covenant Renewal Service – details TBC

JANUARY 2022

14 10:00 District Finance Group – Zoom
19-20 Superintendent's Residential – Thornleigh Hotel, Grange over Sands
22 10:00 District Circuit Treasurers Meeting
25 10:00 District Policy Group

FEBRUARY 2022

5 Ecumenical Ministry Development Day – North Lakes Hotel, Penrith
9 19:30 District Safeguarding Group
12 10 District MDR Group – Stainton Methodist Church
27-1 Visit of Mrs Barbara Easton, Vice-President

MARCH 2022

3 10:00 District Probationers Committee – Penrith Methodist Church
16 10:00 Presbyteral Synod – KSAT Circuit
22 10:00 District Policy Group
31 Lay Employee Day – venue (full day) or Zoom (1/2 day) TBC

APRIL 2022

30 10:00 Representative Synod – South Lakes Circuit

MAY 2022

14 10:00 District Stationing Briefing – Stainton Methodist Church

JUNE 2022

23-30 Conference - Telford

JULY 2022

7 10:00 District Policy Group

SEPTEMBER 2022

10 9:30 Representative Synod – North Cumbria Circuit

This has been sent to Ecumenical Representatives, District Officers, Ministers, Supernumerary Ministers, Lay workers, Circuit Stewards, Circuit Administrators, and others who have subscribed to this Newsletter. Please feel free to circulate this among your churches and to others who may find any of these items of interest. If anyone would like to be added to the circulation list, please contact the District Administrator, Carolyn Dickinson.

The next issue of the Newsletter will be in October and any information for this to be sent to the District Administrator, Carolyn Dickinson, by 1st October.

<p>Chair of District: The Revd Dr James N Tebbutt Telephone: 01768 866342 Email: cumbriamethodistchair@outlook.com</p>	<p>District Administrator/Chair's PA: Carolyn Dickinson Telephone: 07727 415400 Email: cumbriamethodistdistrict@outlook.com</p>
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